

**Anthropology 217**  
**Visual Anthropology: Art as Cultural Representation**

**Instructor:** Lisa Sorensen-Stahl  
**Phone:** 436-2076

**Office:** Physical Science Bldg., Rm. 230  
**Office Hours:** M,W & F 11 – 11:50 a.m.

***COURSE DESCRIPTION:***

This course examines the phenomenon of human creative expression from the Paleolithic Period to modern day with examples of various mediums such as the visual arts, architecture, sculpture, personal adornment and more recently, film. We will explore how cultural beliefs are manifested in these mediums and, to an extent, how artworks create and sustain a culture's belief systems, values and social relations. We will also discuss correlations between the complexity of art styles and the nature of artworks in ancient, modern, Eastern and Western societies. Students will gain an understanding of how social context is an inextricable facet of creative expression that determines how artwork is circulated and received within individual cultures.

***COURSE ATTRIBUTES:***

Anth 217 counts toward Liberal Art credit in general education requirements and also carries an AH2 attribute.

***REQUIRED READINGS:***

Heider, Karl G. *Seeing Anthropology: Cultural Anthropology Through Film*. 2007. Allyn and Bacon Press.

***COURSE REQUIREMENTS:***

This class is a combination of reading and discussion format, lectures and a final project. A portion of every class will be devoted to discussion of assigned readings so, it is essential to keep up with reading assignments. Slides, power point presentations and films will complement lectures in this class. A final project will account for a large percentage of the course grade and will reflect materials presented in lectures, therefore, good attendance is crucial. The final project will be a choice of creating a work of art that reflects your culture's beliefs, norms, ceremonies, etc. or choosing artwork from an individual culture and writing an analysis paper about how this work reflects the social and/or political context of that culture.

A grade for this course is based on the following:

Quizzes/ Class Participation	25%
Project	25%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%

**Class participation:** Students are expected to initiate discussion regarding assigned readings and contribute frequently to class discussions on reading materials. Participation accounts for ¼ of your total grade.

**Quizzes:** Material in quizzes will reflect reading assignments, lectures and films shown in class and account for ¼ of your total grade.

**Project:** Students may choose to create an original artwork, any medium that strongly reflects some beliefs and norms commonly held by their chosen culture. A written synopsis of your final project that clearly illustrates your main points will accompany your artwork. This “self-critique” needs to be at least 5 pages in length, typed, double spaced, standard fonts and include sources. This critique is to be handed in to me, on the same day as your presentation. Projects will be reviewed toward the end of the semester during presentations to the class.

Students may choose instead to select an artwork, any medium, from one particular culture and write an analysis of their findings and opinions pertaining to how this work reflects the culture in which it was created. Papers must be at least 15 pages in length, typed, double spaced, standard fonts and include a bibliography. The final project accounts for ¼ of your total grade.

**Exams:** Exams will measure your retention and understanding of reading assignments, films and lecture materials. Each exam counts for ¼ of your total grade.

**Academic Honesty:**

Please review SUCO’s statement on academic honesty at: [www.oneonta.edu/development/judicial/code.asp#conduct](http://www.oneonta.edu/development/judicial/code.asp#conduct). Any student found cheating will receive a failing grade for the course.

## Schedule

Date	Topics	Text Readings
Jan 14	Introduction	
Jan 19,21	<b>Human Diversity</b>	Chap. 1
Jan 26,28	<b>Cultural Construction</b>	Chap. 2
Feb 2,4	<b>Fieldwork and Film Representation</b>	Chap. 3
Feb 9,11	<b>Cultural Symbolism</b>	Chap. 4
Feb 16,18	<b>National Character/Cultural Construction of Self</b>	Chap. 5
March 2,4	<b>Material Culture/Procurement Systems</b>	Chap. 6
March 9,11	<b>Cultural Conditions of Exchange</b>	Chap. 7
Mar 16	<b>Class Activity</b>	
Mar 18	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Exam</b>	
Mar 23,25	<b>Cultural Symbols of Marriage/Family Systems</b>	Chap. 8
Mar 30, April 1	<b>Social Organization/Kinship</b>	Chap. 9
April 15	<b>Symbols of Social Control</b>	Chap. 10
April 20,22	<b>Supernatural Symbolism</b>	Chap. 11
April 27, 29	<b>Presentation of Projects</b>	
May 4, 6	<b>Presentation of Projects</b>	
May 13	<b>Final Exam 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.</b>	IRC 7